

writing a user ID for specifying a user to a memory element which has a cartridge ID stored therein, the memory element being possessed by the cartridge attached to the image-forming apparatus;

acquiring the user ID and the cartridge ID from the memory element of a recovered cartridge;

increasing a point value corresponding to the acquired user ID by using a point value corresponding to the acquired cartridge ID; and

providing a user specified by the acquired user ID with a benefit when the increased point value exceeds a predetermined threshold value.

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 5-52 have been examined and rejected. By this amendment claims 6-8, 12, 16, 18-19, 22, 30 and 34 are amended, claims 1, 3, 5, 9-11, 15, 17, 20-21, 24-29, 32-33 and 36-52 are cancelled, and claims 53-79 are added. Accordingly, claims 6-8, 12-14, 16, 18-19, 22-23, 30-31, 34-35 and 53-79 are all claims pending in the present application.

As the art cited in the outstanding Office Action fails to teach or suggest each element of the claims as now pending. Accordingly, Applicant submits that each pending claim is now in a condition for allowance.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. Patent Appl'n No. 09/764,103

Atty Docket Q62224

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

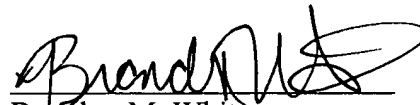
Respectfully submitted,

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